

## Urbana School District 116

Jean F. Burkholder  
Administrative Service Center  
www.usd116.org

## News Release

Contact Name: Mark Schultz  
217-384-3650  
[mschultz@usd116.org](mailto:mschultz@usd116.org)

Date: April 16, 2008  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Thomas Paine Elementary Teacher Wins Prestigious State Award *Kindergarten Teacher Elaine Harmon Wins Golden Apple***

Thomas Paine Elementary Teacher Elaine Harmon is one of only 10 teachers in Central Illinois to win the highly coveted Golden Apple Award that honors excellent teaching. The award recognizes teachers from 18 central Illinois Counties. Over 600 teachers were nominated in Champaign, Christian, Coles, De Witt, Douglas, Edgar, Ford, Livingston, Logan, Macon, McLean, Morgan, Moultrie, Peoria, Piatt, Sangamon and Tazewell counties. Harmon was picked as a winner after she was named as one of the 30 finalists. For more information, please see [http://www.goldenapple.org/pages/golden\\_apple\\_central\\_illinois/27.php](http://www.goldenapple.org/pages/golden_apple_central_illinois/27.php).

Harmon, a 31-year teaching veteran, was informed she was a Golden Apple winner in her classroom today when Golden Apple Officials, Superintendent Dr. Preston Williams, Jr., and Harmon's family paid her a surprise visit. Harmon says she was "surprised, overwhelmed, and very humbled" to win this award. "There are so many good teachers out there. Just to be chosen as one of (the winners) is just an honor and a privilege," Harmon adds.

Thomas Paine Principal Sandra Cooper says, "We are so proud of Elaine. She epitomizes our mission statement 'meeting the needs of children and preparing them for the future.' She walks the talk."

Golden Apple Central Illinois Award-winning teachers will receive a sabbatical to study at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, a laptop computer, \$3,000, and the opportunity to create educational programs that will positively impact students.

Golden Apple will honor Harmon and all the winners June 7, 2008, at a special ceremony at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts in Champaign.

Media wishing to interview Harmon should contact Thomas Paine Elementary School at 384-3605.

###

*Outstanding schools in an outstanding community!*

Urbana School District • 205 North Race St. • P.O. Box 3039 • Urbana, IL 61803-3039